? 23 April 1916

1916

Athelhampton.

Sunday.

Dearest,

I forgot yesterday to ask you what I wanted to ask you – which is, will you out of the overflowing generosity & superabundance of your magnanimous heart (in which I have always believed) design me a sketch for my summer cloak? I bought some grey silk & sent it to Miss Jay, who can't make it for lack of a sketch. What I want is something light & simple – I should think perhaps a kind of Kimono – & the colour of a young elephant, with a slight crinkle. I couldn't get what I wanted, owing to the presence of Amber Reeves, who haunts me. If you could send the sketch straight to

Mein Joy, I should bless your shadow.
She has just sent me my blue summer
dress, which I like very much — in fact,
I think even as an advertisement
I should pay the Omega, as I'm always
being asked who made my things.
It's a superb spring morning, a Lyttelton
Langer are in high good temper
reading on the terrace. NYPL This is far
the loveliest country in Europe —

Expecting a letter from you,

I am your faithful

Singe.

HAMILL 12/29/69

1916

Leonard says that the caretaker at Charleston said that Mr. Stacy to whom the house belonged, when he heard that Mr. Ray who the present tenant, wanted to sub-let it, said he wouldn't let him sublet it – The Rays are very bad tenants & have let the house get out of repair; so you'd probably have to negotiate with Mr. Stacey. not I Thd. I think he'd certainly prefer you as tenants.

Hogarth House
Richmond.

14th May.

1916

Dearest,

I was getting quite alarmed, not hearing from you, – remembering your promise to write at least twice a week. However I guessed that you must have been having the Devil of a time. I know nothing about the Tribunal beyond what I saw in the Daily News. It was headed 'A Follower of Tolstoy', who had been brought up by his mother to believe in Tolstoy, & there was an artist aged 31, also refused. What steps will they take now? do they mean to go to prison? Leonard went to Craig who said that he would give him a certificate of unfitness on his own account, as well as mine. He has written a very strong letter, saying that L. is highly nervous, suffers from permanent tremor, & would probably break down if in the army. Also that I am still in a very shaky state, & would very likely have a bad mental breakdown if they took him. He thinks they ought to give L. complete exemption on these grounds. which I strongly advise him not to put in anything about Conscience, as the Tribunals are so erratic. It is rather difficult to know what to do, as the Tribunals annoys them. L. lunched with the Sidney Webbs, who assume professed to be behind the scenes; according to them, the War Office is has already too many men, & will consider at any gentleman getting off; so the thing to do is to produce letters from Harley St. doctors, or the peerage. They think that the war will probably be over before October, as Germany seems to be crumbling internally. L. went to a Committee, where Buxton said that we are now considering the terms of peace, & only the amount of compensation remains to be settled. I daresay this is mere gossip, but there does seem some chance that things are changing – Also, the government seems to be thoroughly badgered by the member for C. Os. What is Clive

doing? I suppose a nature is about the best & sure one can have. I wonder what you'll do, if Duncan & Bunny are made to do some national work. I wish you'd leave Wissett, & take Charleston. Lenard went over it, & says it's a most delightful house & strongly advises you to take it. It is about a mile from Firle, in that little patch which lies under the Downs. It has a charming garden with a pond, & fruit trees, & vegetables, all now rather run wild, but you could make it lovely. The house is very nice, with large rooms, & one room with big windows fit for a studio. At present it is used apparently as a week end place, by a couple who keep innumerable animals, & most of the rooms are used by animals only. They say it only takes half an hour to walk to Glynde station, through the Park, & you have Firle, with its telephone, quite near, so you would be more accessible than we are. There is a W.C. & a bathroom, but the bath only has cold water. The house wants doing up — & the wall papers are awful. But it sounds a most attractive place — & 4 miles from us, so you wouldn't be badgered by us. I suppose I must write & tell all this to Karin; but I'd much rather you had it than they.

Walking in Kew Gardens the other day, who should we run into but Watty, as spruce as a Bank Clerk, & as bald as a egg. He took us back to tea in his exquisite residence, which has walls of ducks egg green, & delicately tinted engravings of 18th Century buildings hang perfectly straight, & all his books polished into order, & a green baize board with a crowd of invitation cards. He goes to dances every night, & has become a sham man of the world. And then he began upon the King & Queen, & the President, & how wonderful Lee President thinks him, & his kidney, & his rheumatism, & long long stories about Princess Mary & her fair-in waiting, whom she made wear a gas mask & then gave orders to his man, in a corner of the R.A — which Watty thought showed a fine wit — Poor creature! He knows he's but a shag, & ask the time he tries to excuse himself.

We left Molly at Asheham, where she was to finish her novel; was busy verging on collapse, & poor creature, resigned to her deafness, what the Dr. say is permanent, as the nerve of her right ear is destroyed. People are much nicer when they stay with one — I went say nicer, but more natural. What do you think of a country life? James went before his National Service Com: & they said he must work on the land which he refused to do; but we think, if L. gets allowed that, we might retire to Asheham, & take service under Gen. O God! I've got to go & see St. Menna, & St. Mary!

Yr B.

NYPL
HAMILL 12/1917

1916

Hogarth

Saturday.

Dearest,

Clive has just rung up & says that Duncan has had his questions put to him. He seemed rather doubtful what I'd better do about Nelly, but on thinking it over it seemed to me best to write to her at once, telling her about Duncan & saying that if she thought she could do anything I would send her details on a day or two. So I hope you will let me have them.

I do hope it will come all right

Yr B.

1916

Hogarth House,
Paradise Road,
Richmond.

Dearest

This letter has just come from Nelly.
If Lord Salisbury wants outside testimony,
What had I better do? Get Roger or
Clive or someone to write or see him?
I'm writing to thank Nelly, & saying that
there any amount of testimony if Ld. S. wants it.
I'll let you know if I hear again.

V B.

I suppose Lord S. will want testimony as
to Duncan's conscience & not as to his
artistic genius. Please write, in case I hear again from
Nelly.

Do you see that Charles Fisher went down on
the Invincible!

7 June 1916

Hogarth House,
Paradise Road,
Richmond.

1916/

Wednesday.

Dearest,

I have just had the enclosed letter from Nelly. Before it came, I had your telegram, which as you see, reads rather mysteriously. I think you must have written "outside evidence sent officially" — not send, as I haven't any to send. I sent a messenger to Nelly before I got her letter (as she is away for the day) asking her to tell Lord Salisbury about Duncan at once, & repeating about his being very honest & a good painter. It sounds from her letter rather as though Lord S. didn't wish to be approached unofficially — but I hope she will at any rate send him Duncan's name.

I am telephoning to Clive & telling him about Nelly's letter, in case he thinks we had better take any further steps.

Yr B.